

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 TUNIS 01330 251519Z  
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CU-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01  
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15  
USIA-06 FBO-02 MCT-01 SY-05 USSS-00 AID-05 PC-01 /084 W  
-----252015 044599 /41

R 251442Z FEB 77  
FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5883  
INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS  
AMEMBASSY PARIS  
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

C O N F I D E N T I A L TUNIS 1330

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PINT PINS TS  
SUBJECT: STUDENT DISORDERS

REF: TUNIS 1282 AND TUNIS 1285

1. STUDENT DEMONSTRATION WHICH ERUPTED FEBRUARY 24  
IN DOWNTOWN TUNIS AND RESULTED IN MINOR DAMAGE TO USIS  
LIBRARY (THREE PLATE GLASS WINDOWS BORKEN) WAS PART OF ON-  
GOING STUDENT POLITICAL AGITATION  
THAT HAS DISRUPTED UNIVERSITY OF TUNIS DURING PAST  
TEN DAYS. THIS ACADEMIC YEAR HAD BEEN UNUSALLY  
QUIET, BUT RADICAL STUDENTS INITIATED AGITATION ON  
FEBRUARY 16 WITH LARGE MEETING ON CAMPUS THAT PASSED  
POLITICAL DECLARATION CONDEMNING GOT FOR "CAPITALIST,  
BOURGEOIS" POLICIES AND FOR HAVING SOLD TUNISIA OUT  
TO THE UNITED STATES. ONLY UNIVERSITY REALTED ISSUE  
WAS DEMAND THAT SPECIAL GUARDS BE REMOVED FROM UNIVERSITY  
BUILDINGS. STRIKES AT SEVERAL FACULTIES FOLLOWED  
AND THERE HAVE BEEN MINOR CLASHES BETWEEN STUDENTS  
AND POLICE.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 TUNIS 01330 251519Z

2. ON FEBRUARY 21, POLICE ENTERED STUDENT DORMITORIES  
LOCATED IN SUBURBAN LE BARDO TO PURSUE AGITATORS AND,  
ACCORDING TO STUDENT SOURCES, ROUGHED UP MANY STUDENTS  
AND CAUSED PROPERTY DAMAGE. IN PRESS RELEASE ON  
FEBRUARY 21 INCIDENT, GOT HAS CLAIMED THAT STUDENTS  
CAUSED THE DAMAGE. SINCE FEBRUARY 21, RUMORS HAVE  
CIRCULATED IN TUNIS THAT SIX STUDENTS WERE KILLED

DURING THESE CLASHES AND THE DEMONSTRATORS IN TUNIS ON FEBRUARY 24 WERE APPARENTLY ATTEMPTING TO CONVINCE THE PUBLIC THAT THE RUMORS WERE TRUE. THE SHOUTED SLOGANS SUCH AS "WAKE UP PEOPLE," "SIX STUDENTS HAVE BEEN KILLED," "ACHOUR IS A TRAITOR," AND "BELKHODJA IS AN ASSASSIN." THE GOVERNMENT DENIES THAT ANY DEATHS HAVE RESULTED FROM CLASSHES AND SAYS THAT ONLY ONE STUDENT HAS BEEN HOSPITALIZED BECAUSE OF INJURIES SUFFERED FEBRUARY 21. SPEAKING AT GOT MUNICIPAL CONFERENCE IN SOUSSE ON FEBRUARY 24, INTERIOR MINISTER BELKHODJA CATEGORICALLY DENIED THAT THERE HAD BEEN ANY DEATHS.

3. JUDGING FROM THE EVIDENCE AT OUR DISPOSAL, WE DOUBT THAT ANYONE HAS BEEN KILLED. IT APPEARS THAT RADICAL ELEMENTS AMONG STUDENTS ARE USING OLD TACTIC OF PROVOKING CONFRONTATION WITH POLICE IN ORDER TO WIN SYMPAHTY AND COOPERATION OF GROUPS THAT DO NOT SHARE RADICALS' POLITICAL OBJECTIVES. RADICALS SEEK TO DISRUPT NORMAL FUNCTIONING OF UNIVERSITY H YEAR, USUALLY DURING FEBRUARY. STORIES OF DEATHS AT HANDS OF POLICE ARE COMMONLY HEARD, AND JUST AS COMMONLY PROVED FALSE. ANTI-U.S. TANGENT OF FEBRUARY A24 DEMONSTRATION IN TUNIS APPEARS NOT TO REPRESENT MAIN CURRENTS OF OPINION AMONG STUDENTS AND THAT DAMAGE TO LIBRARY WAS WORK OF VERY SMALL GROUP OF SERIOUS RADICALS AS DEMONSTRATION PASSED ON WAY TO UNATTAINED OBJECTIVE OF MINISTRY OF INTERIOR.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 TUNIS 01330 251519Z

4. GOT QUICKLY RESTORED ORDER IN CENTRAL TUNIS AND THE CITY AS WELL AS THE UNIVERSITY NOW CALM. IT IS INTERESTING TO NOTE, HOWEVER, THAT FEBRUARY 24 DEMONSTRATION AS OTHERS LIKE IT IN PAST TOUCHED TENDER NERVE IN TUNISIAN PSYCHE AND SET OFF SPECULATION THAT MUCH MORE SERIOUS DISORDERS WILL ACCOMPANY TRANSITION INTO IMMEDIATE POST-BOURGUIBA PERIOD. MULCAHY

NOTE BY OC/T: PARA 3 AS RECEIVED.

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN



## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Sent Date:** 25-Feb-1977 12:00:00 am  
**Decaption Date:** 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1977TUNIS01330  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Expiration:**  
**Film Number:** D770066-1034  
**Format:** TEL  
**From:** TUNIS  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1977/newtext/t1977026/aaaaafyn.tel  
**Line Count:** 108  
**Litigation Code IDs:**  
**Litigation Codes:**  
**Litigation History:**  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Message ID:** a79bacc9-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc  
**Office:** ACTION NEA  
**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 2  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** 77 TUNIS 1282, 77 TUNIS 1285  
**Retention:** 0  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 15-Nov-2004 12:00:00 am  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**SAS ID:** 3371534  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** STUDENT DISORDERS  
**TAGS:** PINT, PINS, TS  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**vdkgvwkey:** odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS\_Docs/a79bacc9-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc  
**Review Markings:**  
Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
22 May 2009  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009